

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on June 4, 2008. Claims 1 and 3-12 are pending.

Claims 1, 2 and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Wu (U.S.P. No. 6,187,440).

Claim 1 has been amended, to recite the limitations of “wherein the first sheet has, in accordance with a predetermined pattern and facing the film of liquid, reactive regions and non-reactive regions, the reactive regions being functionalized with chemically reactive groups, and respective supporting members have reactive regions functionalized with chemically reactive groups, the chemically reactive groups of the first sheet and the supporting members having reacted with one another to covalently bond the supporting members to the first sheet at locations where the first sheet contacts the supporting members.” No new matter has been added.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited Wu fails to teach or suggest the above limitations, as claimed in amended claim 1.

The Office Action points to col. 5, lines 33-44 to show these limitations. Applicant’s respectfully disagree. In these sections Wu shows that free radicals form covalent bonds with reactive groups contained within the coatings on the substrate ... and by also from covalent bonds with reactive groups contained within the adhesive and also within the spacer particle...

Nothing in this section teaches “wherein the first sheet has, in accordance with a predetermined pattern and facing the film of liquid, reactive regions and non-reactive regions...”, as claimed in claim 1.

The Manual For Patenting Examining Procedure (MPEP) § 2131 clearly sets forth the standard for rejecting a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). “A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” (MPEP § 2131, quoting Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed Cir. 1987)). “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ...claim.” (MPEP § 2131, quoting Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989)). “The elements must be arranged as required by the claim, but this is not an *ipsissimis verbis* test, i.e. identity of terminology is not required.” (MPEP § 2131, citing In re Bond, 15 USPQ2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990)).

Since Wu does not teach all of the limitations of independent claim 1, it can not anticipate the present invention. For at least the above cited reasons, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over Wu.

Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu in view of Akashi (U.S.P. No. 5,679,414). Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu in view of Wakahara (U.S.P. No. 6,285,382). Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu and Wakahara in view of Fukao

et al. (U.S.P. No. 6,211,931 B1). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wu and Wakahara in view of Fukao et al. (U.S.P. No. 6,211,931 B1).

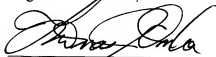
The Office further points to Wakahara to teach a patterned layer (163), as claimed in claim 5. Applicants respectfully disagree. Element 163 of Wakahara is an adhesive layer... see col. 6, lines 57-58. Accordingly, nothing in this section teaches “wherein the first sheet has, in accordance with a predetermined pattern and facing the film of liquid, reactive regions and non-reactive regions...”, as claimed in claim 1 or “wherein the first sheet comprises a base film and, provided thereon, a separate, patterned layer which provides the reactive regions in accordance with the predetermined pattern, and wherein regions of the base film exposed by the separate, patterned layer to the film of liquid, provide the non-reactive regions,” as claimed in claim 5.

With regard to claims 2-12 these claims depend from the independent claim discussed above, which have been shown to be allowable in view of the cited reference. Accordingly, each of claims 2-12 are also allowable by virtue of its dependence from an allowable base claim.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the present claims are patentable in view of the cited references. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas J. Onka', written over a horizontal line.

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